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## USE OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING IN EXTENSION WORK

A. B. Graham

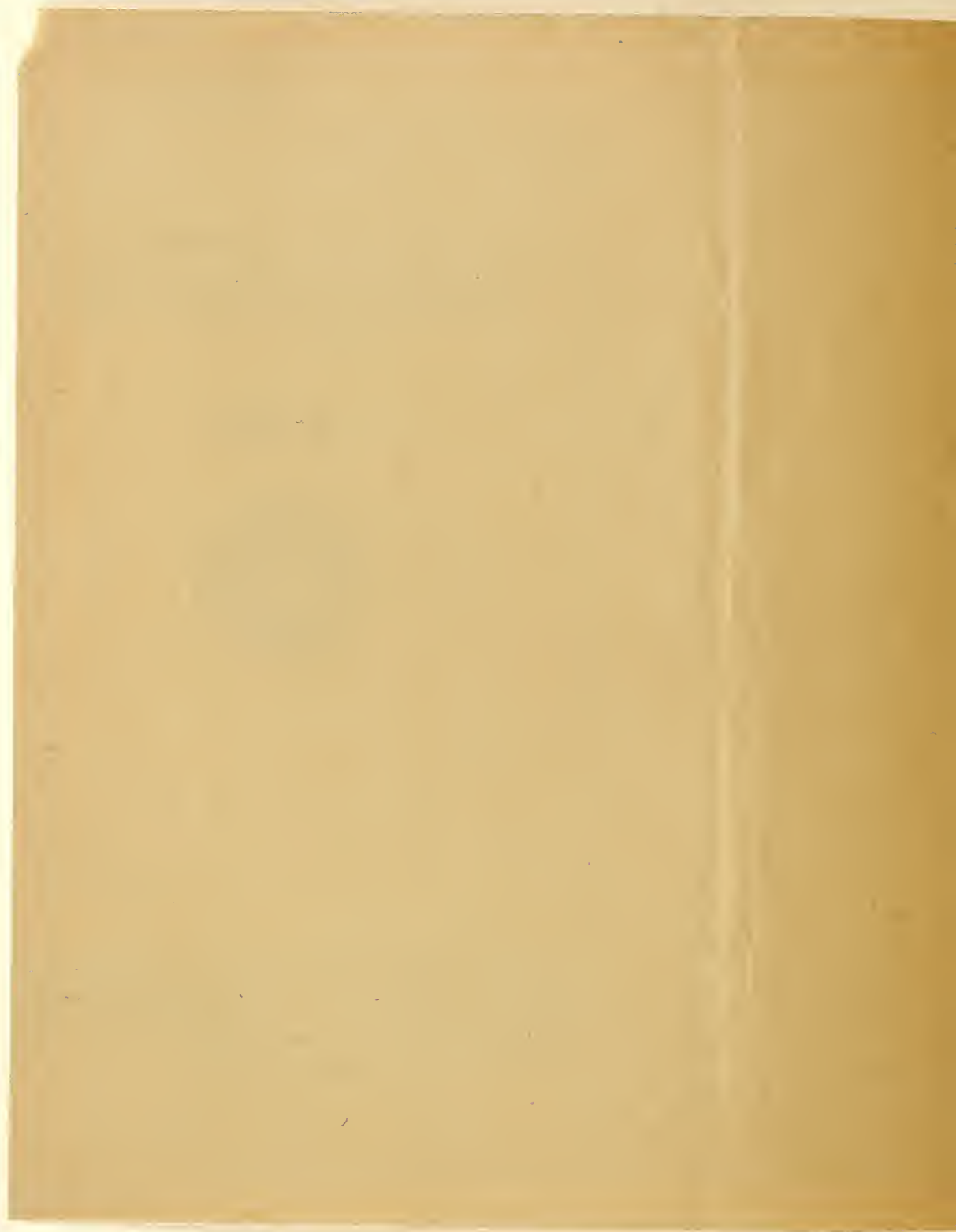


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## USE OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING IN EXTENSION WORK

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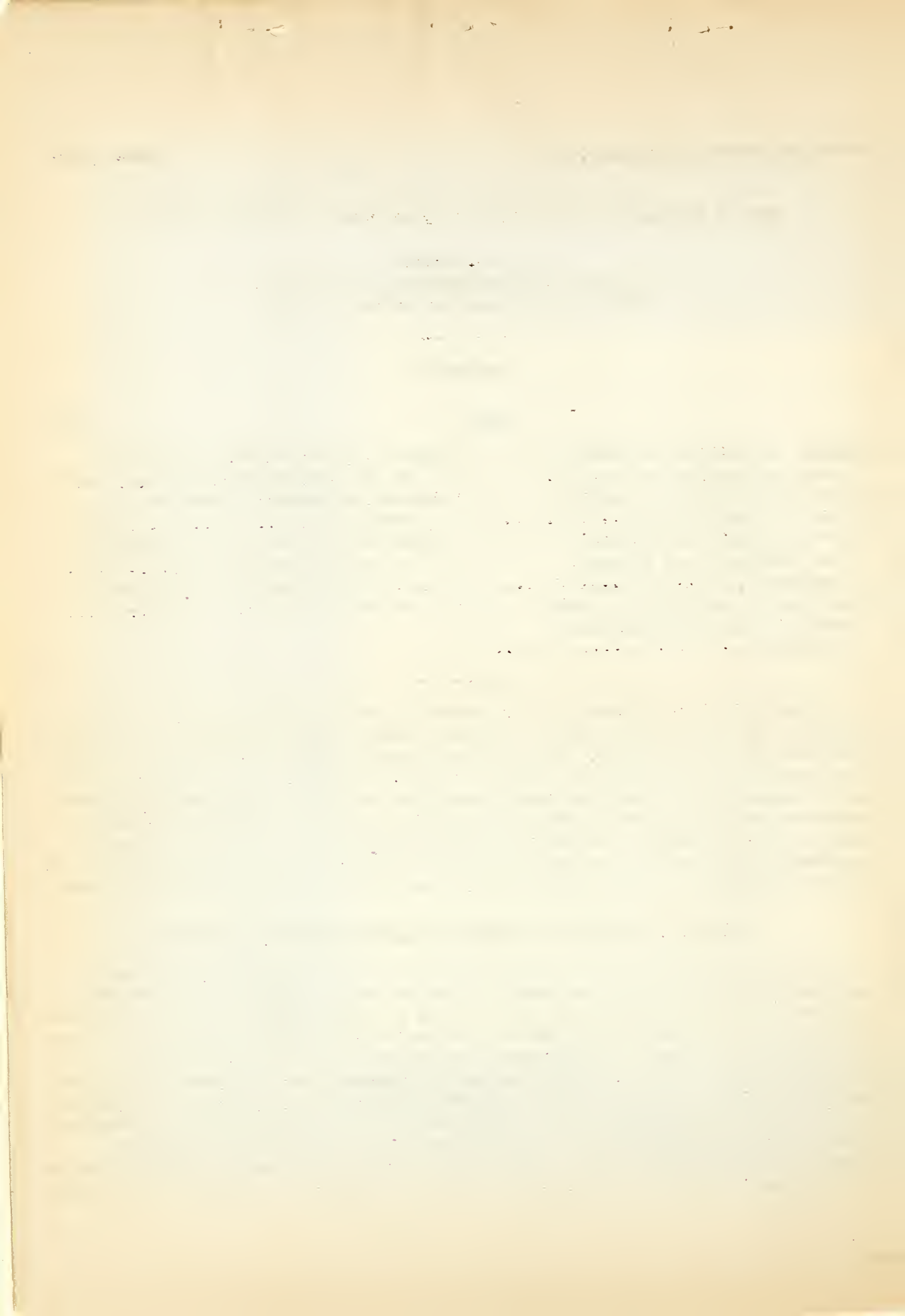
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Teaching, to be effective, must arouse in the individual a real or imaginary experience of pleasure that will impel the performance of a practice resulting to one's benefit. The process leading to the acceptance and use of good practices in agriculture and home economics must be to the end that time may be economized, effort and money saved, pride of the individual quickened, increased probability of an extension of life, or that he may experience a sense of joy, pleasure, and happiness within the group to which he belongs. Successful teaching is measured according to the degree we make people feel as we feel, think as we think, and act as we act, or as we would have them act.

Pleasure or Comfort the Basis of Every Motive for Action

The feelings are at the basis of every advanced movement. One must sense an expected pleasure or comfort from an act. A knowledge of the various manifestations of the feelings must be kept in mind, such as the possibilities of winning over a rival in a contest; the pride in being recognized as a project leader; the love of making money, as in getting a larger income from the sprayed or pruned orchard, or from a better managed farm and home; the joy of good health from proper nutrition and sanitation; and social standing and aesthetic appreciation from general appearances of the farm home and its members, as in well-planted yards and roadsides, tastefully dressed persons, and appropriately furnished rooms. The new or anticipated pleasure should find in one's present practice an annoyance that will lead to an enlarged displeasure.





prompting one to accept the new practice through the availability of easily acquired material or the performance of a simple act, not requiring the breaking up of a complex habit.

#### Desire for Pleasure or Comfort Must be Satisfied

The satisfaction of the feelings lies at the seat of attracting attention and creating interest. Satisfaction must be obtained through the gradual removal of annoyances, hence the necessity for using various means and agencies to attract attention and stimulate interest.

If the annoyance is low-producing dairy cows because of food lacking nutritive qualities, the slogan "Milk Flows Where Alfalfa Grows" may be given attention because it suggests a substitution of increased yields for the annoyance of low yields. If the annoyance is due to poor breeding, the slogan "Better Bulls Bring Bigger Bank Balances" may be given attention as a partial substitution for the annoyance. If the absence of lime is the annoyance which one can be made to experience in the attempt to produce a crop of legumes, the following old Flemish rhyme with its modern appendix may offer an anticipated pleasure:

Lime and lime without manure,  
Make both farm and farmer poor;  
But lime, manure, and vigorous clover,  
Make the old farm smile all over.

#### Variety of Means and Agencies and Continuity of Thought Required

Posters, cartoons, pageants, and contrast pictures and exhibits may attract attention, but each of these used singly and at extended intervals of time may in a great degree lose effect by passing into the subconscious mind; or, as we ordinarily say, may be forgotten; but if the same thought be repeated through various means and agencies showing continuity, attention may pass over into interest through the use of such agencies as news stories, slides, demonstrations, lectures, and bulletins. As the stage of interest increases, the power of recall is within the plane of consciousness through these recurring suggestions: A desire for information through lectures, bulletins, and in participation, tours, and the like.

At this point a great deal of our extension work halts. It is not enough to attract attention, stimulate interest, and create desire. We must at this point make a general appraisal or survey of not only materials necessary to carry out these desires, but of the nature, nationality, and mental characteristics of people. This is a point at which both reason and suggestion must be used to quicken people to act.





### Steps to Getting Action

Attention	Interest	Desire		Action	Satisfaction
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To interpret blank column, see "Avenues to Satisfaction," middle column, page 7.

### Group Characteristics

1	2	3	4
<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Imagination</u>	<u>Intelligent imitation</u>	<u>Instinctive imitation</u>
Imagination	Initiative	Instinctive imitation	Intelligent imitation
Intelligent imitation	Intelligent imitation	Initiative	Imagination
Instinctive imitation	Instinctive imitation	Imagination	Initiative

### Four Types or Groups of People Must be Used to Establish a Practice

A general classification of people may be made as follows:

(1) Those having initiative, that inner urge which impels them to do the thing that they have set up in their minds can be done.

(2) Those in whom there is some initiative but the imagination stands out as the predominant characteristic.

The first group has enough imagination to picture clearly the thing to be done and the method by which it may be done. The second more clearly pictures what is to be done but may be weak in developing a method by which to do it. Probably these two groups combined represent about one-eighth of our population. In these two groups will usually be found a large percentage of our local leadership. There will probably be many of the same persons who lead in arranging



for the community picnic, initiate improvement of roads, and who generally lead in social and religious affairs.

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These are the two groups that, as a rule, must be appealed to, lead in demonstrations. It is on their farms or in their homes that demonstrations are conducted. Their stories should be told in the newspapers, and exhibits should be made from material selected from their farms or homes. Arrangements should be made with these persons for results to be observed on tours, because through the confidence that two other groups usually have in these people, the lesson demonstrated will be carried both from confidence and suggestion. The two groups referred to above are able to build up an idea and the means for carrying it out through the reading of bulletins, newspaper articles, books, and the like. They are able to do more abstract thinking.

(3) The third group may be known as one that intelligently imitates. Persons belonging to this group may read about silo construction or they may examine carefully a bulletin on canning, but their initiative and imagination are so submerged that they can not proceed to put a piece of work into effect without an opportunity to interpret intelligently what somebody else has actually done. They must attend field meetings and tours to see demonstrations or they must observe manipulations.

(4) In the fourth group, one finds initiative and imagination standing well down the mental scale, also the ability to imitate intelligently. They follow more or less instinctively. The chief interest is doing what the group does. We are all group-loving beings. This fourth division performs most of its activities because it likes to imitate those whom it has really made and accepted as leaders within the group.

The last two groups, the intelligent imitators and the instinctive imitators, deal with things that are concrete; consequently the contrast exhibit, the demonstration, and other similar concrete agencies for teaching must be used because they can become acquainted with them through their senses.

Out of these two groups may be found persons who, from the standpoint of mere manipulation, may be used as demonstrators to other members of their group, but they can get little further than mere manipulation, because the reasoning process may not be guided so far as it might by the facts in the case. Inasmuch as these two groups include probably seven-eighths of our people, it becomes necessary to make our teaching very simple.

#### Complex Practices Must be Broken up into Simple Practices

The first two groups may comprehend and carry out a complex demonstration, but the next two must be appealed to by a single or simple practice. Some simple practice like culling poultry, selection of seed corn, or feeding of legume hay, should be used rather than a demonstration in poultry raising, farm management, the improvement of the corn crop, or improvement of livestock feeding. Even in the use of a single practice, it should be related very closely to what the person knows and has himself experienced.





If it is the raising of a legume crop differing from clover which he has already raised, the preparation of the soil, the quality of seed sown, and perhaps the method of curing and stacking, it should relate itself as closely as possible to the clover which he has already raised. We can never depart from the old principle that we must proceed from the known to the related unknown, from the concrete to the abstract, and from the simple to the complex.

### Variety of Appeals Should be Made

While we are appealing to the individual to attract attention, stimulate interest, and create desire, we should keep in mind that there are certain definite characteristics which help us to build up four types of appeals. Whatever is presented to the individual through any means or agency, if it is to reach his habit-fixed mind, should be done -

(1) With the end in view that some economy of time, distance, energy or money, will be brought about.

(2) That he will have a keener appreciation of himself as an individual because of his leadership in the community, pride in the excellence of his crops and animals, and the general appearance of the farmstead and his family.

(3) That the span of his life will probably be extended, he and his children will have better health, and that the opportunities for education and greater usefulness may be enhanced.

(4) That he may emulate the example set by those whose practices are worthy of imitation.

The primary appeal in the selection of better seed stocks is economic. That equipment for running water should be installed in the home is an economic appeal which saves energy. The better distribution of labor throughout the working season and the change in the height of kitchen tables and ironing boards may also be economical in the saving of energy. The appeal to the individual to lead in some project in the community or township may be somewhat of an egotistic one, as is likewise the suggestion to plant the home grounds, to select a hat that fits the face as well as the head, and to select colors for clothing and the style of finishing; they all touch the pride of the individual as to his personal appearance or his standing among people.

The selection of a diet or of thirst-quenching drinks may contribute far more toward the nature of an appeal to prolong life and to promote health than to bring about any economy. The appeal to wear foot-fitting shoes may also be one contribution to health and incidentally length of life, but here as well as in the bobbing of hair, and even styles of clothing and styles of architecture for residences, and the building of roads, battle with what is by edict of the fashion setters and country carpenters, set up as models to be followed. The powerful expression of group-loving beings through imitation, always brings the question to the mind of the one taught a new practice, the feeling of being a dissenter. Not until enough have joined with him from his near-by associations, will he feel that he is not doing a radically new thing. The appeal through imitation is powerful, but it sometimes takes a long time before the will of a small group of intelligent leaders can stimulate others to follow their practices.



### Remove Difficulties and Annoyances to Bring About Action

Earlier in this paper reference was made to a breakdown in our extension efforts. After we had worked hard for a long time, we brought the person with the habit-fixed mind to a stage of interest and into desire, to perform the practice which we were proposing - to fully accept or to act, whether the proposition has come by a series of suggestions or through a long process of reasoning. But before action can take place, he finds himself experiencing certain annoyances; he has not the amount of money necessary to put the practice into effect, or he realizes that he has not sufficient credit.

He may not know where to get the seed or lime, the poison, or insecticide mixture. The housewife may not know where to get the particular equipment suggested; the dealer does not keep the foot-fitting shoe; the type of vegetable, fruit, or other food material may not be on the market. Then it becomes the business of the extension worker to bridge this gap by planning for carrying out a piece of work in a modified form that will fit the purse, or it is his business to suggest some plan that will establish credit. Some arrangement must be made whereby seeds and other material can be easily obtained without countering too much the usual line of habit of travel. The storekeeper should be helped to know that there will be prospective purchases of goods, recommended by extension agent.

In other words, the new practice regardless of desire, can not be put into effect until there is a removal of the annoyance and the act made reasonably easy. Through the first and second weeks, one may feel encouraged that the practice is accepted, but this is not necessarily true because the old habit has not yet been displaced, and it will not be displaced by the new practice until there is repeated satisfaction. Even after extension workers thought a new practice had been established, they found that for some reason there had been a break back to the old practices. This meant that there was some element of annoyance which asserted itself so unpleasantly that for the sake of comfort and pleasure, they reverted to practices under an old habit.

Now, in order to establish a new practice among habit-fixed persons, the extension worker must look out for those continued little annoyances which in some cases may be found only among the few. These little annoyances may be like the sheep that breaks out of the fold. It may take only one or two sheep to set up in others the idea of following. The effect of a few leaders upon the crowd will demonstrate the willingness of people to follow, and herein lies one of the great difficulties sometimes not reckoned with among extension workers. Man is such a gregarious or group-loving animal that he will follow leaders sometimes even against his judgment.





# AVENUES TO SATISFACTION

## Preventing scabby potatoes

Annoyances	Avenues to Satisfaction	Satisfaction
Low yields		Increase in yields
Poor quality		Better quality
Ignorance of material for use in treatment	Formula published	
Source of material	Material supplied by druggist	
Method of application	Method demonstrations for treatment held	Pride in accomplishment

## Establishing Poultry Enterprises

Lack of high-producing hens	Accredited hatcheries listed	Increased egg production
Scarcity of certain feeds	Feeds supplied by local dealer	
Lack of poultry houses	Poultry house plans and specifications supplied by agricultural college	
	Ready-to-build poultry houses kept in stock by local lumber company	
Lack of credit	Credit furnished by banks and merchants	
Lack established outlet for products	Eggs assembled, candled, and marketed by local dealers	Additional source of income Freedom from debt Pride in accomplishment



### Time is Necessary for Practices to Become Fixed

One of the features of extension work that causes among extension workers more annoyance and trying experiences than any others is the thought that people do not accept their teachings as rapidly as they should. That people should accept them rapidly is more than we should expect from large masses of people who have been years acquiring the habits under which they now live and work. We must, therefore, realize that any method of extension teaching, whether it be to quicken the individual to the point of interest and desire, or whether it be in the act and subsequent establishing of the new habit, is one covering a long period of time.

We can console ourselves that there will be extension jobs to perform long after our tenure of position may have expired, but the accomplishing of any piece of work should pass over to our successors in such a way that certain reasonably well-fixed methods of appeal and teaching can be applied from year to year and perhaps from generation to generation in an attempt to establish better practices in the home and on the farm. The marked success that is to come to our work must be brought about more from the study of our people than from a study of subject matter.

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